GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3160
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2017
e-Commerce Consumers
Boianapalli Shri Vinod Kumar;Hari Shri G.;Malyadri Shri Sriram;Puttaraju Shri C.S.;Selvam Shri V. Panneer;Shekhawat Shri Gajendra Singh

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of complaints against e-commerce companies have increased by more than 300 percent during the last three years and if so, the details thereof;
(b) the action taken by the Government for quick redressal of the complaints of the consumers against these companies;
(c) whether the Government is aware that there is no clear definition of e-commerce and there is no clear policy regarding the operation of various portals doing e-business, if so, the reasons therefor;
(d) whether the Government plans to make it mandatory for e-commerce firms to put product pictures on the site in a manner that the printed MRP is visible and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
(e) the manner in which the Government is planning to address the issues such as the place of business, jurisdictional issues, non-availability of common dispute resolution system etc. with regard to e-commerce firms and the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) : The number of complaints against e-commerce companies, as registered in the National Consumer Helpline, over the last three years are as under:

Call received at National Consumer Helpline in e-commerce Sector
Year Calls
May 2014 - March 2015 16919
April 2015 - March 2016 28331
April 2016- February 2017 48998

(b) : The redressal of the complaints are registered by a complainant with the three tier system of quasi-judicial bodies namely the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission established under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Besides, Consumer Grievances addressed to the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) are redressed by forwarding the complaints to concerned departments and the companies and constant monitoring the progress in their redressal. The NCH has established partnership with 225 companies under a convergence programme for speedy redressal.

(c) : The Government is aware about the functioning of e-commerce companies. The rights of the consumers involved in e-commerce are equally protected as per the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, in a manner similar to transactions involving goods and services.

(d) : The draft amendment to the Packaged Commodities Rules, 2011 made under the provisions of Legal Metrology Act, 2009 proposes that the mandatory labelling declarations as per the rules shall be displayed on the online trading platforms.

(e) : A consumer dealing in e-commerce can file complaints in consumer courts for deficiency in service and defective products, under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 which has provisions regarding jurisdictional issues. The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, introduced in August, 2015, seeks to strengthen the provisions regarding jurisdictional and also has provisions regarding Alternate Disputes Resolution.

*****